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Winthrop University

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# Winthrop Awarded Grant to Prepare Teachers Who Work with Students Limited in English

## Quick Facts

- The U.S. Department of Education awarded Winthrop a \$700,000 grant to prepare teachers to work with students who speak limited English.
- The three-year grant is called Teaching Teachers to Work with English Language Learners.

ROCK HILL, S.C. - Winthrop University recently was awarded nearly a \$700,000 grant from the **U.S. Department of Education** to prepare teacher candidates, faculty members and Rock Hill teachers for working with students with limited English.

The three-year grant, called **Teaching Teachers to Work with English Language Learners**, will give Winthrop the opportunity to train nearly 150 public school teachers who deal with English-as-a-Second-Language students. The university also will train its own faculty members who interact with future teachers.

"Winthrop stays in close touch with public school leaders throughout the state, and this is one of the needs we hear expressed most often, so the Richard W. Riley College of Education designed a program to help," said **President Anthony DiGiorgio**. "Our selection for federal grant support is simply a reflection of Winthrop's strong track record on such leading-edge programs."

Winthrop was one of 139 of 411 applicants awarded grants this month totaling \$36.5 million, according to Cynthia Ryan, director of discretionary grants in the Office of English Language Acquisition in the U.S. Department of Education. The average grant size was \$250,000 per year.

Ryan said the goal of the grants is to prepare teachers and other personnel to better serve English-language learners. Funds from the program come from Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act, signed in 2001.

Winthrop officials said the Rock Hill community is in dire need of such intense support services because the Latino student population has increased more than 700 percent in the last decade. Currently, the Rock Hill school district has only two teachers fully certified to teach English for speakers of other languages, yet there are more than 550 such students.

"Winthrop has a long-standing partnership with the Rock Hill School District. This is another opportunity for us to work together on activities that will benefit both the university and the local schools," said Patricia Graham, dean of the **Riley College of Education** at Winthrop. Last spring, Winthrop and the district forged a partnership to establish a magnet school for science and technology at Sunset Park Elementary.

Rock Hill school officials are excited about the grant because it will provide courses that are convenient locally and will help place certified teachers in many schools, said Sheila Huckabee, executive director of secondary schools with the Rock Hill school district.

Administering the grant from Winthrop are **Kelly Costner**, assistant professor of curriculum and instruction, and **Elke Schneider**, assistant professor of curriculum and instruction. Faculty members in the **Department of Modern Languages** and **Department of English** also will be involved.

The federal grant will provide Winthrop \$195,451 the first year, \$253,295 the second year and \$251,127 in the final year.

The grant has three components:

- Coursework for ESOL Add-on Certification will increase the number of ESOL-certified teachers in the district. Fifty teachers will take five graduate-level courses, including a semester-long practicum supervised by specialists at Winthrop.
- The Inservice Professional Development Program will give 75 teachers the chance to take a graduate-level course to learn the needs and strategies of dealing with students with little English knowledge.
- The Teacher Education Faculty Professional Development Summer Institutes will involve nearly 50 Winthrop faculty members from various departments in incorporating content and assignments in their lessons to prepare future teachers for dealing with students who know little English. They will be taught in three summer institutes of two days each to increase their knowledge base.

The \$699,873 grant is offered through the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students. The federal government is providing 100 percent of the funds for “Teaching Teachers to Work with English Language Learners.”

For more information, contact Costner at 803/323-4750 or [costnerk@winthrop.edu](mailto:costnerk@winthrop.edu).

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